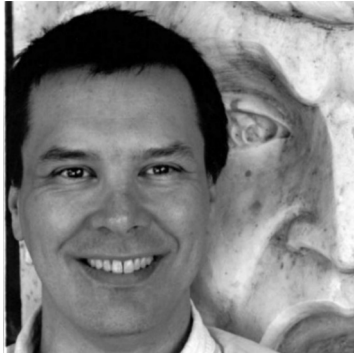


# GEOFFREY GORDON - 2024 Biography and List of Works

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US/UK composer Geoffrey Gordon's contributions to the contemporary music repertoire have been and continue to be exceptional. Intense and luxuriant harmony, passionate melody and superb handling of instrumentation and sonic textures define his music. His works include orchestral and chamber music—vocal and instrumental—as well as scores for theatre, dance and film. His music has been called “darkly seductive” (*New York Times*), “complex, richly-satisfying” (*BBC Music Magazine*), “luminous and ecstatic” (*Gramophone*), “taut and exhilarating,” (*Classical Ear*), “iridescent and fierce” (*The Chicago Tribune*), “haunting” (*Strings Magazine*), “gripping” (*Bachtrack*) and “magnificent” (*Fanfare*). Critic Richard Hanlon of *MusicWeb International* credits Gordon's music with “flashes of vocal writing which recall Britten at his best.” The Philharmonia identifies “his infectious style” and “an ear for melody”- The *New York Times* his “zest for sonic experimentation”. The Philharmonia identifies “his infectious style and “an ear for melody,” the *New York Times* his “zest for sonic experimentation.” *Gramophone* said of his newest recording, *Mythologies and Mad Songs*, “the whole album is a powerful piece of advocacy for a composer with a big imagination.”

Geoffrey Gordon has worked with and been commissioned by many of the finest ensembles in the world, including The Philharmonia, BBC Philharmonic, the Munich Philharmonic, the Minnesota Orchestra, Malmö Symfoniorkester, the Cleveland Orchestra, the Dallas Symphony, the Copenhagen Philharmonic, the English String Orchestra, Frankfurt Radio Symphony Orchestra, WDR Symphony Orchestra Cologne, the Milwaukee Symphony, the Buffalo Philharmonic, Britten Sinfonia, Birmingham Contemporary Music Group, JACK Quartet, Boston Modern Orchestra Project, the San Francisco Contemporary Music Players and the International Contemporary Ensemble. Upcoming and recent commissions include works for BBC Philharmonic and BBC Radio 3, Orchestre Philharmonique de Radio France, Orchestre de la Suisse Romande, Antwerp Symphony, Brussels Philharmonic, St Paul Chamber Orchestra, Swedish Chamber Orchestra, Hong Kong Sinfonietta and Lausanne Chamber Orchestra, and a major orchestral recording project with BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra. His chamber music has premiered worldwide, including at Carnegie Hall in New York, the Schoenberg Center in Vienna, Hakuju Hall in Tokyo, and St John's Smith Square and Conway Hall in London. In 2021/22 cellist Benedict Klöckner releases on CD and premieres a new solo commission in Berlin (Philharmonic Hall), Frankfurt (Alte Oper) and New York (Carnegie Hall). Gordon has been commissioned to write a work for organ solo for premiere in November 2022 as part of the Jubilee commemoration at Coventry Cathedral. A newly commissioned song cycle setting the Holy Sonnets of John Donne premiered at Oxford International Song Festival, with baritone Julien Van Mellaerts and pianist Alisdair Hogarth, in October 2023. He is a 2024 winner of the Andrea Ceraso Rome Award.

Recently, and in a run of outstanding orchestral commissions, the Philharmonia under Martyn Brabbins gave the world premiere of Gordon's bass clarinet concerto, *Prometheus*, after the treatment by Franz Kafka, at Royal Festival Hall, London, with US and Nordic premieres in 2019 with the Minnesota Orchestra under Osmo Vänskä and Malmö Symphony under Marc Soustrot. In November, 2024, the BBC Philharmonic and John Storgårds in conjunction with BBC Radio Three will premiere Gordon's new bassoon concerto, *Anima Mia*, with soloist Roberto Giaccaglia. Orchestre de la Suisse Romande, which co-commissioned the work, will give the European premiere in 2025. In March, 2025, Orchestre Philharmonique de Radio France, Chœur de Radio France and conductor Mikko Franck will give the world premiere of Gordon's *Ses purs ongles très haut*, a commission from Radio France based on a text by French symbolist poet Stéphane Mallarmé. In October 2022, Brussels Philharmonic premiered Gordon's new harp concerto *Eolian* with soloist Eline Groslot, and in June 2024, Frankfurt Radio Symphony premiered Gordon's new oboe concerto *Creavit Deus Hominem* with soloist José Vegara. Gordon's concerto for English horn and orchestra, *Mad Song*, after William Blake's well-known poem, premiered in November 2022 with Antwerp Symphony with soloist Dimitri Mestdag. In other highlights, the National Taiwan Symphony Orchestra (NTSO) with soloist Toke Møldrup will give the Asian premiere of his *Doktor Faustus Cello Concerto*: this work, as well as Gordon's ravishing setting of Keats' *Ode to a Nightingale* for choir and cello, which premiered in May 2018 in Copenhagen, was released on *Cello Libris*, a new disc on the BIS records label, featuring the Copenhagen Philharmonic under conductor Lan Shui to extensive critical acclaim. Richard Hanlon (Musicweb International) commended the Keats setting: “... flashes of vocal writing which recall Britten at his best”. Gordon's song cycles *Peter Quince at the Clavier* and *Sonnets from Neruda* premiered in March 2018 at the Arnold Schoenberg Center, Vienna, and in October 2017, the Munich Philharmonic under James Gaffigan premiered his trumpet Concerto *CHASE* after the sculptures of Giacometti. His cello sonata *FATHOMS* premiered at Carnegie Hall in December 2015 and his *Winterleben* for horn, mezzo and piano (commissioned for Los Angeles Philharmonic principal horn, Andrew Bain) premiered in August 2015 as part of the 47th International Horn Symposium in Los Angeles. His *Saint Blue*, (trumpet,

piano and strings), which was commissioned by the English String Orchestra, has been released commercially on the Signum label, and was praised in the BBC Music Magazine: “a sonic exploration of the sacred and profane in a complex and richly satisfying work”. Gordon received the 2015 commission award from the American Music Project with a major new chamber work for clarinet and string quartet (the JACK Quartet and Anthony McGill, principal clarinet of New York Philharmonic) which premiered in New York City and Chicago. His riveting horn trio *THORN* was premiered by Ben Goldscheider, Callum Smart and Richard Uttley in London in February 2019, and his chamber work *Cosmic inflation*, based on research into the first vibrations of the universe commissioned by Muse-IC Project, hosted by Institut Curie, premiered in March 2019 in Paris with members of the Orchestre Philharmonique de Radio France. His *Harmonie - An Jenny*, for soprano and solo cello, was a prize winner in the Birmingham Contemporary Music Group’s Marx Lieder Competition, premiered by BCMG in Marx’s hometown of Trier, Germany and was released on CD on the Coviello label. His *Jeux de Création* for solo harp features as title track on a recent CD release on the Naxos label, and received concert premiere in 2022 by Orchestre Symphonique de Montréal principal harp, Jennifer Swartz, on a program at the Salle Bourgie in Montréal. A new solo cello work for cellist Benedict Klöckner included in Mr. Klöckner’s recitals in Berlin (Philharmonic Hall, 25.6. 2021), Frankfurt (Alte Oper 11.12.2021) and New York (Carnegie Hall, November 2021) and cd release. His choral work, *Crucifixus*, for double choir and solo cello, featured during the Holy Week Festival in London, in April, 2020, with the Choir of Royal Holloway, at St. John’s Smith Square. Saar Berger, solo horn at Ensemble Modern Frankfurt, premiered a new work, *Roman Rituals*, as part of the prestigious Donaueschingen Music Days Festival in October, 2020. His solo trumpet work *He Saith among the trumpets*, inspired by the poems of Alun Lewis, premiered at Wigmore Hall (broadcast on BBC3) by Simon Höfele as part of the Wigmore Autumn 2020 re-launch concert series after Covid.

Honoured by a number of residencies internationally, Gordon has twice served as composer-in-residence at the Aaron Copland House and is winner of 2017-18 Mario Merz Prize for Music, an honour which included a major commission for the 2018 concert season. He is also a finalist for the 2019 Krzysztof Penderecki International Composers Competition Award and he has served a residency at the International Centre for Composers in Visby, Sweden. His work has been funded by the Barlow Endowment, the National Endowment for the Arts, the United Performing Arts Fund, the Concert Artists Guild, the American Composers Forum, Meet the Composer, New Music USA, the MacArthur Foundation, the American Music Center, the Abelson Foundation, the Mary Flagler Cary Trust, the Cheswaty Foundation and the Bush Foundation. He has been in residence at the La Napoule Arts Foundation in Cannes, and at the historic Cliff Dweller Club in Chicago. He has been nominated for the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center’s Elise Stoeger Prize, and recognized by the Academy of Arts and Letters. He has received academic fellowship support from Boston University, New York University and the Guildhall in London. An advocate for composers’ rights, Gordon has also served as an ASCAP representative in Washington, lobbying Congress on behalf of copyright protection and digital media law. Complete collections of his works are held in libraries around the world, including the Loeb Music Library at Harvard University, the Music Library at Northwestern University, the Bayerische Staatsbibliothek in Munich, Germany, and the National University of Singapore, among many others.

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## WORKS

### SOLO

- *Hymn Magnificat* 20' (2022)  
(solo organ; commissioned by Luke Fitzgerald, on behalf of Coventry Cathedral, in celebration of the 2022 Coventry Cathedral Diamond Jubilee celebrations)
- *Exposure* 10' (2021)  
(solo violin; commissioned by the Freundeskreises Hauskonzert Musik für heute e.V., as part of Musik 21 Lower Saxony, for violinist Elisabeth Kufferath.)
- *Jeux de Création* 8' (2020)  
(solo harp; commissioned for Frankfurt Radio Symphony Orchestra principal harp)
- *He saith among the trumpets* 10' (2020)  
(solo trumpet in C; commissioned for soloist Simon Höfele)



- *Roman Rituals* 6' (2020)  
(solo horn in F; commissioned for soloist Saar Berger)
- *Goodman* 12' (2020)  
(solo Bb clarinet; commissioned for soloist Simon Reitmaier by Anna Ferro)
- *Nes qu'on porroit* 11' (2020)  
(cello solo; commissioned for cellist Benedict Klöckner)
- *Three Summer Sketches ....* 12' (2012)  
(Black Earth; Mineral Point; Spring Green)  
(piano solo; commissioned by the Wisconsin Arts Board)
- *Bagatelle after Beethoven* 3' (2012)  
(piano solo; commissioned by the International Beethoven Festival)
- *Aria and Cadenza for solo violin* 10' (2001)
- *Lorca Music per cello solo* 10' (1999)
- *Impromptu for solo piano* 7' (1995)

## **CHAMBER**

- *Ad Parnassum* after the works of Paul Klee (for alto saxophone and piano) 24' (2024)  
commissioned for soloist Tim McAllister on behalf of the University of Michigan
- *The Dance of Life* -from *Five Munch Studies* (for woodwind quintet) 3' (2024)  
commissioned by Adrian Morejon/Dorian Wind Quintet as part of the Community Commissions Initiative in celebration of the 80th Anniversary of the Composers Conference
- *Vermilion* 12' (2020)  
(for tenor trombone and piano)  
(commissioned by Yu Tamaki Hosoi)
- *cosmic inflation and the end of the dark ages* 10' (2019)  
(for Bb clarinet/bass clarinet, string quartet, harp and piano)  
commissioned on behalf of the Institut Curie, Paris
- *La terre est bleue comme une orange No. 1* 40' (2019)  
(for two string quartets)  
(commissioned by the Merz Foundation in connection with the Mario Merz Prize)
- *La terre est bleue comme une orange No. 2* 10' (2019)  
(for one string quartet)  
(commissioned by the Friction String Quartet)
- *Aphrodite and Eros* (fighting off the advances of Pan) 5' (2018)  
(duo for violin and cello)
- *THORN* 15' (2018)  
(violin, horn and piano; for the Britten Sinfonia)
- *QUINTET* (for Bb clarinet and string quartet) 25' (2015)  
(commissioned by the American Music Project for the JACK Quartet)

- *FATHOMS* 25' (2015)  
(Five Impressions of The Tempest, with Prelude, for cello and piano)  
(commissioned for Toke Møldrup)
- *Abaciscus* (String Quartet No. 2) 18' (2014)  
(commissioned by Third Angle Ensemble)
- *Duo Sonata* 16' (2014)  
(two French horns and piano)
- *Rhapsody* (after A Day in the Life) (large chamber ensemble) 8' (2013)  
(commissioned by Great Noise Ensemble)
- *Flamingo* (Five Views of the Calder Sculpture—Chicago) 6' (2010)  
(flute {dbl piccolo and alto flute}, Bb clarinet {dbl. bass clarinet}, cello and piano)
- *Reliquary* 25' (2010)  
(violin, cello and piano)
- *TRIO* (Bb clarinet, violin and cello) 10' (2009)  
(commissioned for Xanthos Ensemble)
- *Ink on Paper* (String Quartet No. 1) 25' (2008)  
(Commissioned by the Concert Artists Guild)
- *Fancywork* (violin and guitar) 16' (2006)  
(commissioned by the Barlow Endowment)
- *Echoes of Ferrara* (alto recorder--dbl. tenor and soprano--and harpsichord) 20' (2006)  
(commissioned by the American Composers Forum)
- *Bright White Smooth* 6' (2006)  
(flute, viola and harp) (ALSO: flute, cello, one perc., piano)
- *A Canticle in Shards* (flute, oboe, Bb clarinet, bassoon and piano) 7' (2004)  
(commissioned by the Connecticut Commission on Culture)
- *Stanza della Segnatura* 18' (2004)  
(2 recorders, viola da gamba and harpsichord)
- *wrecked angels ...* 12' (2003)  
(flute, guitar and cello)
- *Interiors of a Courtyard* 20' (2003)  
(guitar and mandolin)
- *Cool RED Cool* (after Andy Warhol Self Portrait) 7' (2000)  
(flute, alto sax, trumpet, 2 percussion, piano and bass)
- *Sonata da Chroma* 16' (2000)  
(oboe, Bb clarinet, one percussion, cello and harpsichord)
- *Caravaggio* 8' (2000)  
(oboe {or trumpet}, Bb clarinet, one percussion, cello and harpsichord {or piano})
- *Lines Written in Early Spring* (after Wordsworth, 1789) 9' (1998)  
(flute, English horn and piano; flute, viola and piano)

## VOCAL

- *At the round earths imagin'd corners* (baritone and piano) 25' (2023)  
- in English setting texts from the Holy Sonnets of John Donne;  
commissioned for the Oxford International Song Festival
- *La terre est bleue comme une orange No.3* 4' (2020)  
(in French after a text by Paul Eluard)  
(for mezzo soprano and piano)
- *Fluss Land Stadt* 5' (2018)  
(in German after texts by Rainer Maria Rilke)  
(for six solo voices: SMezATBarB) (/choral version)
- *Harmonie* 7' (2018)  
(in German after a text by Karl Marx)  
(for soprano and solo cello)
- *Peter Quince at the Clavier* 14' (2017)  
(after a text by Wallace Stevens)  
(for baritone and piano)  
(commissioned by Anna Ferro for baritone Tobias Greenhalgh)
- *Winterleben* 24' (2015)  
(after a text by Friedrich Rückert)  
(for mezzo soprano, French horn and piano)  
(commissioned by the Colburn School for Los Angeles Phil principal horn, Andrew Bain)
- *Sonnets from Neruda* 28' (2014)  
(after six texts by Pablo Neruda)  
(for mezzo soprano, baritone and piano)
- *Needles in my flesh ....* 12' (2012)  
(after five texts by poet Pia Tafdrup)  
(alto voice and double bass; commissioned by the Danish Arts Council)
- *Tiger Psalms* (after texts by Ted Hughes) 16' (2011)  
(Commissioned by Fulcrum Point New Music Project)  
(mezzo soprano soloist with flute, clarinet, trumpet, viola, double bass, one perc., piano)
- *Fallen Eve* (Five Songs after Hughes) 17' (2005)  
(commissioned by the Abelson Foundation for International Contemporary Ensemble)  
(mezzo soprano soloist with flute, clarinet, violin, cello, one perc. and piano)
- *la tristesse durera toujours* (after Van Gogh) 23' (2004)  
(soprano soloist with clarinet, violin, cello, one percussion and piano)
- *Collage a Trois Trobar* 10' (1999)  
(five mixed voices with recorders and percussion)

## CHORAL

- *The cold earth slept below* 6' (2020)  
(after a text by Percy Bysshe Shelley)  
(for mixed choir; also for six solo voices: SMezATBarB)
- *Magnificat and Nunc Dimittis* 10' (2020)  
(for mixed choir: SATB and organ)

- *But as I rose out of the laving stream* 4' (2019)  
(after a text by John Milton: "Paradise Regained" Book One)  
(for mixed choir: SATB)
- *Limestone* 6' (2019)  
(after a text by Alice Oswald)  
(for mixed choir: SSAATTBB)
- *Fluss Land Stadt* 5' (2018)  
(in German after texts by Rainer Maria Rilke)  
(for mixed choir)
- *Ode to a Nightingale* (after the text by John Keats) 16' (2017)  
(commissioned for Mogens Dahl Chamber Choir of Copenhagen and cellist Toke Moldrup)  
(for SATB and solo cello)
- *CRUCIFIXUS* 12' (2016)  
(for Double Choir (SATB/SATB) and solo Violoncello)
- *Judas mercator pessimus* 5' (2016)  
(for six unaccompanied male voices)
- *The bird of dawning singeth* 5' (2016)  
(For 12 a capella voices SSSAAATTTBBB)
- *Four Preludes* 8' (after a text by T.S. Eliot) (2013)  
(commissioned by Composers and Schools in Concert)  
(SATB, string orchestra and piano)
- *Love Among the Ruins* 8' (2009)  
(for mixed choir: SATB unaccompanied)  
(OR: for mixed choir SATB, with ten winds, 2 percussion, harp, piano, and bass)
- *Shhhhh* 7' (2005)  
(triptych for mixed choir a cappella)
- *Agnus Dei* 9' (1997)  
(for SATB and ten instruments)

## **ORCHESTRAL**

- *Ses purs ongles très haut* - for solo Bb clarinet, choir and orchestra 23' (2024)  
after the poem Sonnet by Stéphane Mallarmé  
commissioned by Radio France on behalf of the Orchestre Philharmonique de Radio France and Radio France Choir
- *Creavit Deus Hominem* - for solo oboe and orchestra 20' (2023)  
- inspired by the Synchronism art movement of the early 20th c.  
(commissioned by Frankfurt Radio Symphony Orchestra)
- *Anima Mia* - Symphonie Concertante for Bassoon and Orchestra 28' (2022)  
(after the works of H R Giger) (commissioned by BBC Radio 3 for the BBC Philharmonic;  
co-commissioned by Orchestre de la Suisse Romande)
- *Eolian* - A Concerto for Harp and Orchestra 24' (2022)  
(after the poem by Samuel Taylor Coleridge) (commissioned by the Brussels Philharmonic)

- *Fumée* - concerto for Bb clarinet and chamber orchestra 12' (2021)  
(after the chanson by Reynaldo Hahn)  
(commissioned by St. Paul Chamber Orchestra, Swedish Chamber Orchestra, Lausanne Chamber Orchestra and Hong Kong Sinfonietta)
- *Première Rhapsody* - by Claude Debussy/arr. Geoffrey Gordon 8' (2021)  
(commissioned by St. Paul Chamber Orchestra, Swedish Chamber Orchestra, Lausanne Chamber Orchestra and Hong Kong Sinfonietta)
- *Mad Song* - *A Concerto for English horn and Orchestra* 18' (2020)  
(after the poem by William Blake)(commis
- *ICE (aut inveniam viam aut faciam)* - for orchestra 16' (2019)
- *Prometheus* - *A Concerto for Bass Clarinet and Orchestra* 21' (2018)  
(after the treatment of the Greek legend by Franz Kafka)  
(commissioned by the London Philharmonia, Minnesota Orchestra and Malmo Symphony)
- *Twelve* 18' (2017)  
(for large orchestra; after *The Windows of Jerusalem* of Marc Chagall)
- *PUCK - fleeing from the dawn* 7' (2017)  
(for large orchestra)
- *Chase* - *A Concerto for Trumpet and Orchestra* 25' (2017)  
(after the sculptures of artist Alberto Giacometti)  
(commissioned by the Munich Philharmonic)
- *ROCKS* 21' (2016)  
(for symphonic winds, brass, percussion and ensemble)
- *Nescientis Animi* 14' (2016)  
(for large orchestra, after the mathematics of Gottfried Leibniz)
- *Saint Blue* 10' (2015)  
(concertino for trumpet, piano and strings, after Kandinsky)  
(commissioned by the English Symphony Orchestra)
- *Where the Wild Things Are* 21' (2014)  
(for large orchestra; after the story by Maurice Sendak)  
(commissioned by the Cleveland Orchestra, Dallas Symphony and Portland Symphony)
- *Concerto for Cello and Orchestra* 24' (2013)  
(after Thomas Mann's *Doktor Faustus*)  
(commissioned by the Copenhagen Philharmonic)
- *Concerto for Flute and Orchestra* 20' (2012)  
(commissioned by the Buffalo Philharmonic)
- *Concerto for Trombone and Orchestra* 27' (2010)  
(commissioned by the Milwaukee Symphony Orchestra)
- *Meditation and Allegro for Viola and Ensemble* 15' (2010)  
(commissioned for Ensemble Meitar)
- *Shock Diamonds* (for large orchestra) 13' (2009)  
(commissioned for Boston Modern Orchestra Project)
- *Lux Solis Aeterna* (for chamber orchestra) 9' (2008)

- *An Imagined Poussin Triptych* 20' (2004)  
(a fantasia in three movements for string orchestra)
- *Sones Sueño del Maya* 11' (2001)  
(for orchestral winds and percussion)
- *Mis en scene* (for large orchestra) 8' (1999)
- *Concerto in One Movement for Violin and Orchestra* 16' (1997)

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[www.geoffreygordoncomposer.com](http://www.geoffreygordoncomposer.com)

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